

NO SENATE ETHICS INVESTIGATION OF PERATA BUSINESS DEALINGS

The Senate Rules Committee has determined not to conduct a full investigation into the private business dealings of Sen. [Don Perata](#) (D-Alameda), upon advice of the chief counsel to the Legislative Ethics Committee that the allegations against him, "do not rise to the threshold triggering the initiation of full investigative proceedings."

The preliminary inquiry began after newspaper reports detailed the business relationship between Perata and a college friend, Timothy G. Staples,. The reports said Perata paid Staples more than \$300,000 from his campaign funds for political work over the course of four years, while Staples paid the senator \$100,000 per year in personal income during the same period. Questions concerning a bill carried by Perata were also raised.

The announcement came in the form of a letter to Perata from Senators [John Burton](#) (D-San Francisco) and [Ross Johnson](#) (R-Irvine), the chairman and co-chairman of the Senate Rules Committee. The letter noted that Perata ended his financial relationship with Staples after questions were raised about it.

Perata is currently considered a front-runner in the race to replace Burton as President pro Tem of the Senate when Burton is termed-out of office next November. Other reported candidates include Senators [Sheila Kuehl](#) (D-Santa Monica), [Martha Escutia](#) (D-Whittier), and [Tom Torlakson](#) (D-Antioch)

JUVENILE JUSTICE REVAMP

The Schwarzenegger administration is convening a series of meetings over the next three to four weeks regarding a "blowing up boxes" effort to restructure California's juvenile justice system. A working group is being formed for the purpose of developing a specific plan. Reportedly, the group will not be starting with a predefined model of any kind.

The meetings, which could start as early as Friday, will include at least one county supervisor and one county executive officer.

The restructuring effort is no doubt related with the administration's efforts to improve accountability and service delivery regarding Department of Youth Authority facilities and programs. The Governor's budget proposal includes plans to review the

department's parole programs in an effort to identify wards who benefit most from parole services.

Along with parole reforms, the administration is seeking to initiate other reforms that will impact the ward and parolee populations, including amending current statutes to provide for a reduction in the age of the department's jurisdiction for wards and parolees from 25 to 22 years of age.

The administration also proposes to seek the implementation of a new sentencing model. According to the Governor's budget proposal, a new "sentencing model will allow the Department to use its scarce resources for those wards who demonstrate their willingness to be rehabilitated."

The California Department of Corrections and the Department of Youth Authority have come under fire in recent weeks following the release of reports that cite abuse of authority and poor decision-making on the part of administrators from both departments.

FEWER LAWYER-LEGISLATORS -- REVISITED

Following up on an article in last week's "Sacramento Scene," prospects for the number of attorneys in the Legislature even remaining the same next year declined as county election officials certified the election day losses of attorney candidates Elia Pirozzi (R-Redlands, 63rd AD) and John Carcione (D-Redwood City, 21st AD).

DEADLINES UPCOMING

- [April 1](#) -- Spring Recess begins
- [April 12](#) -- Legislature reconvenes .
- [April 23](#) -- Last day for policy committees to hear and report Fiscal Committees fiscal bills introduced in their house.
- [May 7](#) -- Last day for policy committees to hear and report non-fiscal bills introduced in their house to floor.
- [May 14](#) -- Last day for policy committees to meet prior to June 1.
- [May 21](#) -- Last day for Fiscal Committees to hear and report to the Floor bills introduced in their house.
- [May 21](#) -- Last day for Fiscal Committees to meet prior to June 1.
- [May 28](#) -- Last day for bills to be passed out of the house of origin.